SOMJIT'S POWERFUL HOOKS, FOOTWORK EARN HIM A QUARTER-FINAL BERTH 8B

THE Sunday NATION

nationmultimedia.com August 17, 2008 16 PAGES, 2 SECTIONS, VOLUME 33, NO 51962 / Bt25

KITCHENS BECOME A HOT SPACE IN FASHIONABLE THAI HOMES 1B

EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF LIFE AND THE HEALING TOUCH OF AYURVEDA 3B

SHYAPORN in his most popular work: '500 impressions in two minutes!' Below, his other famous YouTube work: 'Asians: The Asian Response to Asian Responders'.

A YouTube star with Thai blood

"Shy" shows how Asians find artistic outlets in digital age

TULSATHIT TAPTIM, THE SUNDAY NATION

There are two types of videos on YouTube – those made "for" the website and those copied-and-uploaded clips flirting with copyright violation. Shyaporn Theerakulstit's works are among those that serve the noble purpose of the website to great effect.

His are hilarious, thought provoking, witty, innovative and inspiring. His channel's views have exceeded 100,000, with more than 4,000 subscriptions. His most popular video – "500 impressions in two minutes!!" – has attracted more than 1.04 million views, not earth-shattering by YouTube's standards but the more than 10,000 comments that keep accumulating every hour are the testament to the quality of this clip.

The fan club of this young director/actor continues to grow and has expanded beyond cyberspace. He has been featured in magazines and websites and was even once dubbed one of the sexiest Asians.

WATCHING MOVIES HELPED

"Shy" was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but both his parents are from Thailand. They separated when he was five and his mother had to work hard raising him and getting her doctorate degree at the same time.

"That's why I wasn't often exposed to Thai language or culture, except for my mother's fantastic cooking, though we did spend several summers in Bangkok with her family," he told *The Nation*.

He studied acting and philosophy at New York University, receiving acting training at various professional acting studios throughout New York City and getting a traditional liberal-arts education.

Despite little filmmaking or directing training while in college, he attained knowledge of film simply from watching a lot of movies."If you watch enough films and shows, both good and bad, you begin to see patterns and learn what works and what doesn't in telling a story. And, particularly, it helps with timing and pacing," he said.

After college Shy took the rather traditional route of most New York actors, mailing professional acting headshots to agents and casting directors and "pounding the pavement" going out on auditions and casting calls. For several years he pretty much only did theater, both classical and experimental, with mixed results.

"The problem with theater is that for every great production you are a part of, you end up also having done four or five really bad productions. It's really hit or miss," he said.

So he began transitioning into film and television, doing a few commercials and independent films. And then he decided to work on both sides of the camera, starting with borrowing a friend's video camera and shooting little short films.

The first video he uploaded onto YouTube was a film he shot for a 24-hour filmmaking contest called "Finders Keepers." It was really only of interest to friends and those at the contest. He uploaded two or three other films and people seemed slightly interested, without a particular surge in subscribers.

"If you watch enough films and shows, both good and bad, you begin to see patterns and learn what works and what doesn't in telling a story. And, particularly, it helps with timing and pacing."

SHYAPORN THEERAKULSTIT

THE VIDEOS THAT WERE HITS

Then in early 2007 he made two videos back to back which addressed Asian American themes, "500 Impressions (in 2 minutes)" and "Asians: The Asian Response to Asian Responders", which demonstrates his wit, sarcasm and great acting skills. Both videos got featured on Digg.com, and suddenly his subscriber base began to grow.

"It's not much by YouTube standards, but far more than I would have ever imagined. Maybe because there's a general lack of representation of Asians in Western media, Asians in Western cultures are now turning to new outlets such as YouTube to find their artistic mirror," he said.

"A large number of top subscribed channels on YouTube are Asians. It's where this new generation has found its voice and it's absolutely great."

ON THE WEB

To watch Shy's works search "shyaporn" on YouTube.

Read the full interview on nationmultimedia.com

FUGITIVE EX-PREMIER

PPP MPs UP IN ARMS OVER WARRANT FOR THAKSIN

Seek explanation from Samak on why he failed to protect ex-PM's reputation

THE SUNDAY NATION

People Power Party members yesterday vented their anger at Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej for failing to protect the reputation of ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

Almost 200 party MPs and election candidates signed a letter urging Samak to clarify why police needed to circulate arrest warrants throughout the country with pictures of Thaksin and wife Pojaman.

They said the move was "disturbing" to many Thaksin supporters throughout the country.

About 40 MPs and party members from all regions met yesterday at the party headquarters.

Among those present were Yasothon MP Peeraphan Phalusuk, Chiang Mai MP Suraphong Tovichakchaikul, Bangkok MP Anusorn Panthong and Samut Prakan MP Natee Sutinphuak, an actor better known as Krung Sriwilai.

Peeraphan told a press conference after the meeting that their reaction reflected the general sentiment of people in their constituencies.

Suraphong said that almost 200 MPs and party members have signed the written request.

It will be presented to Samak tomorrow and they expect Samak to clarify the matter in person during a party meeting on Tuesday.

The group claimed many Thaksin supporters were disturbed and unhappy about the development. They agreed that Thaksin was treated unfairly as he has not been convicted of any wrongdoing, according to Peeraphan.

They also argued that Thaksin, as a former national leader who had contributed to the country, did not deserve to be treated as a criminal.

The opposition, however, criticised the prime minister for failing to respond publicly about Thaksin's attack on the country's justice system.

Deputy secretary-general of the Democrat Party Theptai Senpong yesterday lashed out at Samak for not making a public statement denouncing Thaksin's allegations about the judiciary. He said Thaksin's comments tainted the monarchy and Samak's silence cast doubt on his loyalty to the crown.

Theptai added that perhaps

The opposition, however, has criticised the prime minister for failing to respond publicly to Thaksin's attack on the country's justice system.

Samak was happy Thaksin is now no longer in Thailand because he had a more free hand at running things.

Meanwhile, deputy chair of the Senate foreign committee MR Preeyananthana Rangsit yesterday described Thaksin as "ungrateful". She said Thaksin has tainted the Kingdom's image in a statement defending his decision to skip bail.

Preeyananthana, an appointed senator, said none of Thailand's past leaders in exile had ever criticised the country like Thaksin did.

The senator defended the judiciary saying it was Thaksin who tried and failed to interfere with the process. He is a "sore loser".

The committee, she said, would meet Foreign Minister Tej Bunnag to discuss Thaksin's extradition.

Watch rate rise or consumers, private sector will be hit, Thanong tells BOT

SUCHEERA PINIJPARAKARN
THE SUNDAY NATION

Former Finance Minister Thanong Bidaya said interest-rate rises to curb inflation by the Bank of Thailand must not exceed 25-basis points in the second half of the year.

The central bank last month raised its benchmark interest rate for the first time in two years, hiking it 0.25 basis points to 3.5 per cent in an effort to curb inflation.

It said the rise would ensure inflation remains under control.

Thanong said the bank must be careful. Higher interest rates will increase production costs in the private sector and this will affect consumers. "Interest rate increases cannot curb inflation. As far as I'm concerned, a 25-basis point increase is acceptable, but it would be better if it did not hike the rate," he said.

He forecast headline inflation to decline to 7-8 per cent in the second half of the year, from 9.2 per cent in July. "I'm not worried about inflation in the second half because core inflation is still at 3 per cent, which means that inflation is not serious," he said.

Thanong said while the Finance Ministry and the bank had different economic theories, the agencies could work together.

Despite a decline in global crude-oil prices, they will not fall below US$100 (Bt3,368) a barrel, he said.